



Louisiana Sheriffs' Association

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Secretary Marlene H. Dortch
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

RE: WT Docket #02-55

Dear Secretary Dortch:

Whether it's fighting fires, rescuing victims or battling crime, all officers have a common goal to preserve peace and the safety of their communities. Coordination is a critical aspect of first responders' jobs in both emergency situations and non-emergency situations such as professional associations who aim to promote the best practices, implement change as needed and bring voices together. The Louisiana Sheriffs' Association was founded on these principals of cooperation and cohesion. In 1938, a group of Louisiana sheriffs realized the need for formal organization to address specific issues in different parts of the state. The Association was born and has become an active, strong voice in Louisiana law enforcement. Today, sixty-five sheriffs and nearly 12,500 deputy sheriffs represent large, small, rural and urban communities across the state of Louisiana.

The Louisiana Sheriffs' Association would like to commend those involved in the development of the comprehensive solution now known as the Consensus Plan. This amalgamation of public safety organizations and members of the private sector identified a pressing public need and worked together to develop a solution. Because the problem is rooted in outdated formal licensing, we know there's no "quick fix". The Consensus Plan's breadth and depth solves this by reorganizing the spectrum to provide public safety with it's own space to operate free from interference.

Through their hard work, the public safety community now has a proactive solution for radio interference, which has been hampering emergency operations and putting lives at risk for nearly five years. Louisiana is one of the 34 states affected by this dangerous problem, so we are quite pleased to see such progress. We now look to the Commission to take the next needed step and formally adopt the Consensus Plan.

We have great faith in the Commission to render an appropriate decision. The development of the Consensus Plan presents an impressive case study of what public-private partnerships can achieve. We hope you can join in support of the Consensus Plan so public safety can once again depend on their communications systems.

Sincerely,

Sheriff Willy J. Martin, Jr., President
Louisiana Sheriffs' Association